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THE ANNUNCIATION

The full name of the Holy Day we celebrate on March 25/April 7 is The Annunciation to the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary. This occurrence is well told in the Gospel of Luke 1:24-38. If we continue reading verses 39-56, we get a bigger picture.

This Holy Day has been on the Church Calendar from very early times. It is placed first in order in the Twelve Great Holy Days of the Church because, as the hymn for the day says it is "the beginning of our salvation," for it announces the coming of the Saviour to the earth. The day almost always falls during Great Lent and the rubrics give great details on how the services for this Holy Day are to be conducted if it falls on different days of the week or weeks of Lent, etc. Because it is such a joyous and important event for all Christians, the strict fast is somewhat relaxed.

The Gospel reading tells us that Archangel Gabriel delivered a message to Mary that she would be the mother of the Son of God. He was going to come down from heaven and was going to be born of a virgin here on earth.

This was God's plan to save mankind from sin and open the way for man to heaven. Ever since Adam had disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden, the gates of heaven had been closed to mankind. People were disturbed but there were prophets of God who told them not to despair because a Messiah would come to them and would open the gates. For hundreds of years people waited and prayed for Him.

There is much written comparing Eve and Mary, the tree of knowledge and the tree of the Cross.

It is God who saves us. In celebrating this day we proclaim faith in God's plan and give honor to Him for giving us the ability to be saved.

The role of the Mother of God is worthy of study. It is explained in the Vesper Service when she replies to Gabriel: "You come to me in human form; why then do

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Lenten Prayer

LORD and Master of my life
Take away from me the will to be lazy and sad,
The desire to get ahead of other people and to boast and brag
Give me instead a pure and humble spirit,
The will to be patient with others and to love them.
Grant, Lord, that I may see my own mistakes,
And keep me from judging the things other people do.
For You are blessed, now and forever. Amen.

ST. EPHRAIM

WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

Great Lent starts on March 10 this year. We have been preparing for this for the past three weeks. Some of you have never observed this Lent, others are aware of it but would like some practical advice.

Perhaps the best advice to remember is not to overdo it! Try not to be overwhelmed by the "idea" of keeping Lent. Set goals for yourself that are realistic, not idealistic. Don't start out abstaining from everything and reading all sorts of books and prayers and give up all as you find that you can't keep up. It is better to rearrange your discipline to include only what you can do. Even if you keep a limited Lent, it is your commitment, consistency and sincerity that are essential. THE GOAL FOR LENT IS TO GET CLOSER TO GOD. If doing these "things" or trying to "keep up" becomes an end in itself, then all of it gets in the way of your relationship with the Lord.

We must be disciplined, not obsessive. We received instructions on how to fast on Cheesfast Sunday from Matthew 6:14-21. Don't make it too easy on yourself, you should put out extra effort.

At the very least, set aside time for prayer every morning and night. Recite St. Ephraim's Prayer, your regular prayers and any that have special meaning to you at least once a day. Try to read the Bible verses for the day. And if you feel that you aren't ready to abstain from dairy as well as meat for the whole Lent, talk to your priest for guidance and support. Lent should be the time for spiritual refreshment and growth.

SPECIAL SERVICE OF GREAT LENT

ST. EPHRAIM'S PRAYER. This is not a service but a prayer which is added to the Lenten Services. The prayer was written by St. Ephraim in the 4th century. In it he beautifully expresses the desire for purification, improvement and real change which are at the heart of repentance. Often the prayer is said with "metanias" or prostrations after each verse. You can find the Prayer printed on the first page of this paper. May this prayer help you each day on your Lenten journey.

THE GREAT CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE. Composed in the 7th century, it is called "Great" not only for its length – it is composed of 250 tropars – but for the depth of powerful feelings described in it. Starting at our fall from paradise, it takes examples from sacred history as models of the holy life and which give us lessons for spiritual correction. The soulful verse: "Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me" is sung over and over again. Some have described the Canon as "raw" and "telling it as it is." It certainly speaks plainly and leaves us "as if we have been kicked" in the stomach.

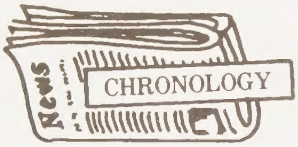
THE ACAFIST (ACATHIST) HYMN. This is one of the most beautiful services. It is a spiritual poem about the Annunciation of the Mother of God. There are two main parts. The first deals with the historical aspect of the life of Christ and His Mother; while the second is an impassioned declaration of dogmatic and moral reflections. We sing of the Mother of God's many virtues and qualities which we are called upon to imitate. The word "acafist" means "to stand," because we stand during this service to show our great love and devotion to the Mother of God.

SOUL SATURDAYS. Following the Divine Liturgy on the designated Saturdays, a general prayer is said for all unknown souls who have no one to pray for them. Specific prayers are said and lists of names are read of the deceased. Give the family list to your priest.

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY VESPERS.

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MARCH 1997

THE ANNUAL MISSION RETREAT held in Switzerland, FL on March 7-9 will look at the mission principles set forth by St. Innocent. He established the Orthodox Missionary Society in 1870 and the OCMC which is holding the retreat continues these principles. Contact 904-829-5132 for more info.

WHAT A WONDERFUL IDEA – A lasting memorial for a loved one can be a packet of The Orthodox Herald going to a parish, religious education group, mission, or choir for a year. Call (717) 256-7232 or write for info.

THE RUSSIAN IMPERIAL JEWELRY COLLECTION, consisting of 250 items including a jeweled chalice, miter and panagia, will go on display this year in Washington as part of an exhibit called "Jewels of the Romanovs: Treasures of the Russian Imperial Court."

"WALK FOR MISSIONS," the 2nd Annual, will be held June 1. The walk will begin at the OCA Cathedral on East 2nd Street and end at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral on East 74th Street. The walk will help support Orthodox Christian Mission work in the US and overseas. Call 718-761-7003; 914-337-9386 evenings; 212-570-2053 evenings; 516-922-0550; or 718-855-6225.

MUCH FOOD IS WASTED IN THE US while people go hungry. Several directives have been set up by federal agencies to help make this food available to charities from hotels, cafeterias, restaurants, etc. Call the Dept. of Agriculture at 1-800-GLEAN IT to get info about this program.

AN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL will start in September 1997 in the Pittsburgh area. Looking for students and teachers to be the first participants. Call (412) 833-3355 or write Orthodox School Committee, 123 Gilkeson Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15228.

THE ALL-MERCIFUL SAVIOUR RUSSIAN ORTHODOX MONASTERY near Seattle has decided to sell gourmet coffee blends, some of which are Byzantium and Abbot's Choice. Father Tryphon, superior, said that, "It is important that monks have work to do."

A SUMMER SCHOOL OF LITURGICAL MUSIC will be held from July 7-20 at Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, NY. The course is divided into: choral conducting, fundamentals of music, services of the church, vocal study and church music history. Possible to work towards a degree. For info write: Fr. Andre Papkov, 54 Fourth St., Ilion, NY 13357 or call (315) 894-6274.

AN UNANTICIPATED OUTCOME of the taking over of monasteries and churches by the communists to use as "showpieces," where tourists were taken, is that these properties were usually kept in fairly good repair. Now, as these churches and monasteries are being returned to the Church to again become working churches and monasteries, it is taking very little work to return them to their prior beauty and status.

ORTHODOX ACTIONLINE, an outreach of Holy Cross Seminary, deals with religious, social and personal concerns of people. Sometimes they are closed during vacation periods. Call (free) (888) 472-4242 if you wish info on the Orthodox faith.

AUSTRIAN CRYSTAL CROSSES with an 18-inch chain are available for $16 from St. Mary's Sisterhood, 2001 N. Andrews Ave., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33311. For info, call Fr. Kiril at (954) 566-6358.

COLLECTION OF SLAVIC PROVERBS contains 725 wise, humorous and inspirational sayings in English and various Slavic languages. They reflect the Carpatho customs and heritage and many can remember hearing them from Baba. Send $13 to John or Mary Billy Kuhtik, 22 West Curtis St., Linden, NJ 07036. More info call (908) 925-4627.

YES, THE ORTHODOX CHURCH has been in Great Britain long before it came to America. As was the custom, an Orthodox Church was built wherever there was a Russian Embassy to serve the religious needs of the embassy personnel. It was established in the 1600's.

Afraid or not, you will have to face your fate. – Russian Proverb

MEETING IN MOSCOW were delegates from the Russian Patriarchate and the Vatican. The Dec. 17, 18 meeting was held to try to resolve tensions in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus concerning church property, allegiance of the faithful, and evangelization programs. Both are against the growing influx of sects and new religious movements in these countries.

UNEXPECTED RESULTS came of visits a BBC Presenter made to the Island of Patmos. He went there several summers to teach a monk English. But he says: "in the typically Orthodox, nonverbal way, he was converting me." Mr. Peter France has been received into the Orthodox Church.

ICONS AND OTHER CHURCH ARTICLES are stolen from churches in Bulgaria. Interpol was called in to help smash what is believed to be a major ring dealing in smuggled church artifacts. This stealing of icons is also prevalent in Eastern Europe. Many of the articles are sold in Berlin.

HUMANITARIAN AID IS BEING SENT by St. Nicholas Parish, 35 Convent Ave., Norwich, CT 06360 in Belarus. For more info, write to the above address or call Mr. Basil Grisel at (860) 887-3623. Donations welcome.

THE VATICAN urges the return of the Eastern Catholic Churches to their traditions and norms. For example: Communion is to be administered after baptism and chrismation meaning young children can now receive and not have to wait until their first Confession; Confession should be heard before the ikon of Christ and not in confessionals or a confession room; Easter is to be celebrated on the date the Orthodox celebrate it in countries with an Orthodox majority; Eastern Catholic children who receive Communion in their parish also have the right to receive when they go to mass at a Latin parish.

•The Annunciation

you speak words beyond human understanding, saying: 'the Lord is with you,' and 'the Lord will dwell in your womb?' Explain to me how ... do not mislead me!"

She is assured that Gabriel is from God and we sing further in the Vespers: "Unlike Eve who was deceived you shall give birth to the Lord, O pure One, and you shall remain incorrupt."

The Mother of God's reply to the message of Gabriel are an expression of her submission to the will of God. There can be no more perfect example of a humble acceptance of God's favor and a trusting and ready obedience to His will than is found in the Ever-Virgin's reply to Gabriel, which is recorded in Luke 1:24-38.

Do we echo equal submission, "I am the Lord's servant," when His words to us are different from what we wish to hear? What are His plans for you?

•Special Service of Great Lent

This day celebrates not only the restoration of once-banned icons to the faithful for help in prayer but anathemas are proclaimed against those who refused to accept the Church's teachings on Christ, His Mother, etc. Many parishes have a procession of icons on this day. Some deaneries hold joint parish celebration.

LITURGY OF PRESANCTIFIED GIFTS. This is a service which combines vespers and aspects of the Divine Liturgy to which we are accustomed. Presanctified means that the gifts for Holy Communion have been prepared and consecrated on the Sunday before this service is held. It is a very solemn service, full of prostrations. Much time is spent on your knees. Special music in a minor key has been composed for the service.

VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS. Again this is not a service but it takes place on the 4th Sunday midway through Lent. The Cross is decorated with flowers and put out in the center of the Church for our veneration. This is to remind us that Jesus carried the Cross until the end. This should serve as an example for us to continue in our Lenten discipline of prayer, fasting, good works and penitence.

BEAUTIFUL

The prayers in the Church do vary even though some people say they find attending Church boring because the same prayers are said over and over.

The services may appear to be the same because they are structured; they follow the same pattern. But different prayers which are based on the Church Calendar are interwoven into all services.

For example during the Presanctified Liturgy on the 3rd Friday of Lent (March 28) we chant: "Like the prodigal son I have turned away from your grace. I have wasted the riches of your goodness. I now run to you, O compassionate Lord, and I cry out, 'I have sinned, O God, have mercy on me'."

Furthermore, on the Wednesday following Cross Sunday we prayerfully recite the words: "Let us all wash our souls in the water of the Fast and approach the precious and all-praise-worthy Cross of the Lord. Let us faithfully bow to it, drawing divine illumination from it and reaping the fruit of eternal salvation, which is peace and great mercy."

CONFESSION

We could give you pages full of reasons why you should not shirk the confessing of your sins especially during this Great Lenten season but we will go right to the teaching from the Scripture. In 1 John 1:1-6 2:16 it says: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth in is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us..."

St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup (1 Cor. 11:28) and in verse 31 he writes: "If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged."

•Weekly Meditations

March 30–Sunday of the Holy Cross. Third Sunday of Great Lent. Heb 4:4-5:6; Mark 8:34-9:1.

O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, with confidence we approach the Throne of Grace, so that we might obtain grace and mercy in this the mid-point of Great Fast. Today, the symbol of our salvation is placed before us to give us renewed strength, comfort, and joy. Be with us in times of loneliness and despair. Touch us with the power of Your immeasurable Love. O You Who willingly stretched out Your arms on the Cross, hear us sinners praying to You and have mercy on us.

(These Weekly Meditations were prepared by Raymond Mastroberte.)

•Kitchen Corner

inches from heat source until the skins are charred black here and there. This should take 10-15 minutes. Place peppers in a brown or plastic bag. Seal tightly, letting the peppers steam for about 15 minutes. Slip off the charred skins. Peel garlic. Place a clove in bottom of a wide-mouthed jar. Cover with 2 pepper halves or 4 quarters. Sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper. Repeat with rest of peppers and garlic. Slowly drizzle oil over the peppers so that it comes down on the sides inside the jar. Cover and keep refrigerated until ready to use. Then bring to room temperature and serve on bread or in salads, etc.

Optional: If you prefer, you may use 1 part vinegar to 3 parts oil instead of all oil.

You may add a bit of herb like thyme to the jar.

PRESS FUND

We give thanks to God for people like you who help us keep The Orthodox Herald alive. It's obvious that the small amount we charge for a copy and not being subsidized makes watching our balance sheets a necessity. We appreciate your help and your understanding. Spasebo.

Irene Allen, Victor Niebuhr, Frank M. Romanick, Mary Chupak, Mary Ann Carmack, John Glagola, Fr. John Haluszczak, Fr. Gary Breton, Helen Durniak, Dee Baumgarten, Helen Dzugan, Annie Lynch, Michael Telepchak, Theodore Thamel, OD, Helen DeLandri, Mary White, Harry and Rose Kulick, Vera Yurchak, Margaret Balog, Alexandria Bosko, Raymond Gadke, Rosemary Hill, Lois Tatich Murphy, Mary Kocharuk, Deborah Samilenko, Anonymous (3), John A. Spack, John & Geraldine Petronka, Ann Worobey, Nida Babich, Donald Belinsky, Mary Pavlicek, Catherine Shaffchick, Ethel Watlock, Dorothy Sawko, Anne Peregrim. Johanna Wagner in memory of parents Mary and Stephen Feltovich. Anita Anderson in memory of grandmother Julia Sharyk who died 3/86. Andrew Tus in memory of wife Irene. Mary Malish in memory of newly-departed Joseph Papp of Akron. In memory of parents Paul and Mary Stenko and John and Mary Selepak. Dcn. Joseph Hotrovich in memory of Hotrovich family - Christine, Olga, Mary, Peter, and Archpriest John, Euphieam and Fred Polik. Helen Cudlic in memory of husband George. Julie Duffney in memory of father John Haschytz. Steve and Lenora Evancho in memory of Mary Grisak, Madeline Charitonovich, John and Anna Sulin, George and Helen Evancho. Michael Petronko, Ph.D. in memory of parents John and Mary. Heritage Tour 1994 members in memory of Tony Pawlik of Manville, NJ. Steve and Elenora Evancho for health of Claudia Sulin and Fr. and Matushka Stroyen. Steve and Mary Matrician to help defray shipping costs of packages to Europe.

ETHNIC CHUCKLE

Dorohaya Tyotya Marea,

Yak tam kolo vas? Toot snitko OK. Yah keeping me Novee Ruk resolution – toh bullo zhe yah budu peesatee doh vas more often.

Oy, yoh, yoh toot tak zimno! We yak hermits neh putting our noses nah vonka only kolee absolutely necessary. Zima toot always bad noh tot reek even worst. Me malee zimneyshe December ot kolee keeping records. Noh yah mam extra bad boh me staree teper retired ee ohn doma all the time. Watchuyeh TV shitkee day and evening. Yah neh mam my own zhetya boh he hotchee sthobee yah watchovala with him. Yah finally decided zhe best to give in boh yah scrazuyu from him always asking where are you? What you doing? Alright yah decided to hook a carpet. Ohn nagging how can you watch TV and do that? Anyhow, you see how it is. Anyway yah hooking takee shumnee, sunflower pattern. Coloree takee bright it cheers me up noh yah really badruyu me husband. Yah dumam zhe yah driving him nuts tish.

Anyhow yah dostala call ot nashe krayankee vchera. Ohna had to go doh doctora nah high blood pressure checkup. Yah bulla taka happy to get out of the house. Me peeshle doh doctora ee tam sitting so long that nashe nohee zaspalee. Kolee nurska finally called her, ohna bulla all stiff ee poh malee limped into the doctor's room. A few minutes later, ohna preshla out walking tak dobree ee peshla dostate coat. Yah chula cheeloveka say to his zhona: "See, I told you he's the best doctor in town. Look how fast he cured that poor woman, you saw how she could hardly walk a few minutes ago."

Kolee me peeshla nah vonka yah poveela krayankee what cheelovek said. Me malee takee good laugh! Yah poveela me husband ee ohn mal dobree smeeh tish.

Toot kazut: "If it's winter can spring be far behind?"

Budte zdrovee,
Hanya

WEEKLY MEDITATIONS

March 2–Sunday of Meat-Fare. Remembrance of the Last Judgment. 1 Cor 8:8-9:2; Matt 25:31-46.

O Jesus, the Just Judge, You know the mind and heart of each person. Our intentions are not hidden from You. On the day of Judgment, all our deeds will be revealed and each will be awarded their due. Show mercy on Your unworthy servants, as they sail through the sea of life. May we share Your loving kindness with every person we encounter through this day, for You said, "Whatever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters, you do it to Me." O Master and Lord, be pleased to accept our fervent plea and have mercy on us.

March 9–Sunday of Cheese-Fare. Remembrance of the Expulsion from Paradise. Rom 13:11-14:4; Matt 6:14-21.

O Son of the Heavenly Father, Lord Jesus Christ our God, You became incarnate and lived among us in the flesh. You fill every time and season with Yourself. Our preparation for the Lenten Season is now ended and a time of fasting, prayer and almsgiving is being ushered in. May we enter it with the spirit of forgiveness, openness, to follow Your commandments, and the joy of knowing Your salvation. Anoint our faces with gladness and new life. Walk with us on the journey to Your Holy Resurrection and fulfill our spiritual needs along the way. O Lord, our only sure Hope, listen to our petition from the depths of our hearts, and have mercy on us.

March 16–Sunday of Orthodoxy. Restoration of Holy Icons. First Sunday of Great Lent. Heb 11:24-26,32-12:2; John 1:43-51.

O Jesus, Son of God, by calling Philip to the ranks of Your apostles, You also invite us to be Your followers. Through answering this calling, may we bring Your healing touch to those most in need of Your grace. Show us to be true examples of faith, just as were Moses, David and Samuel. On the day of our death, enable us to attain Your Kingdom and the enjoyment of the greater things of heaven. May we find inspiration from the lives of all our ancestors of the Faith, who obtained heavenly riches by obeying Your holy Will. O eternal King, hear the heartful prayer of Your servants, and have mercy on us.

March 23–Sunday of the Palsied Man. Commemoration of St. Gregory Palamas. Second Sunday of Great Lent. Heb 1:10-2:3; Matt 2:1-12.

O Lord, the God of mercy, You formed the earth in the beginning, and sent down Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ for our salvation. You have not left us orphans, but have given us teachers and preachers in every age to show us the way to the heavenly Kingdom. Teach us to be diligent in observing the things that have been taught to us. Strengthen us in the faith. Come under the roofs of our souls and raise us from the bed of our sins. We praise, glorify, and worship You all the days of our lives, O Divine Healer, and ask You to heal us and have mercy on us.

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Dabs of Thoughts

The Lord's Prayer has 66 words. The Gettysburg Address has 286 words. The Declaration of Independence has 1,322 words. Government regulations for the sale of cabbage number 26, 911 words.

This year at your Lenten Study Group, why not study Gogol's Mediation on the Liturgy? St. John Chrysastom's Divine Liturgy is under siege and studying Gogol's book should put us on the proper course.

Years ago, the service held during Great Lent at one church in a district with attendance of priests and laypeople from other parishes was known as a PASSIA. There was always great excitement and fervent prayer at this service. Now we call them MISSION Services and the service has somehow lost its impact.

The Orthodox Church encourages its faithful to have Prayers of Mercy for their deceased loved ones on the 3rd, 9th, and 40th day after death and on the 6th and 12th month anniversaries. The Church also sets aside several Saturdays during the year for prayers for the dead. These are called Saturdays of Souls. There are several of them this month on the 1st, 22nd, and 29th of March. Remember to correct your diptich (list of deceased) and give it to the priest before March 1.

On March 29, 1943 meat, butter and cheese went on the ration list because of World War II. To purchase these items, one needed not only money but coupons from a special ration book. Since many Orthodox fast from these items during Lent, they were able to save enough coupons to purchase enough rationed items for Easter/Pascha.

St. Clement of Rome wrote: "Brethren, let us repent without delay. Let us be attentive for our own good, for we are full of much anger and evil. Let us cleanse ourselves from our former sins and let us be saved by repenting with our whole heart. Let us not be pleasers of men (willing to accommodate our morals to appear to belong) nor desire to please ourselves only by our righteousness but we should extend this to others so that the Name is not blasphemed through us (people lose faith in God).

Let us, now that we have time, turn to God, Who calls us while we yet have One who awaits us (while we are still alive). Let us, so long as we are in this world, repent with all our heart of whatever evil we may have done, that we may be saved by the Lord, while we just have time for repentance. Bearing in mind that after we have departed from this world, we shall no longer be able to confess our sins or repent of them.'



EDITORS' NOTES

There are so many different notes on our calendar for March that it was difficult to pick out what to write about. Great Lent starts on March 10, and we find that Meatfast and Cheesfast Sundays precede it. Then there are the different services: Vespers of Forgiveness, Great Canon of St. Andrew, St. Theodore Saturday, Presanctified Services, the Acafist to Blessed Virgin, Sunday of Orthodoxy and the reading of anathemas, the Soul Saturdays, Annunciation, Mission or Passia Services and Veneration of the Cross Sunday. We add St. Ephraim Prayer among other changes and additions to our prayer list in the month of March. Some of these we have touched on; others we have discussed over the years. How caring our Orthodox Church is in trying to bring us closer to God and God closer to us.

In traditional Orthodox circles from the Vespers of Forgiveness until Easter, we bid farewell to people by asking them to pray for us that "we may live to see the Resurrection." This in hope that we may fast, pray and do charitable works and meet the Resurrection more saint-like than when we started Lent.

By popular request we are again sponsoring a Carpathian Heritage Tour in 1997. It will probably be held in September, last for around 12 days and cost under $2000. If you want to know more about the tour, you may meet some of the participants from the other 3 tours at the Arch on May 26 at St. Tikhon's Monastery following the Divine Liturgy. Write us or call for further information (717) 256-7232.

The sisters in the monasteries, where we have been sending the embroidery thread and sewing supplies, asked us to thank you. They were overwhelmed by the beauty of the material and thread. We send the packages by private carrier, thus assuring that they were delivered right to the monastery.

A disturbing trend seems to be taking hold in many of the jurisdictions of the Orthodox Church. Although most of them have seminaries, they are ordaining priests after "private" study and little continuing education. Has the admonition in 1 Tim 5:23 been forgotten, "Lay hands suddenly on no man."?

We also note that whole congregations are being accepted into Orthodoxy by charismation and/or communion. This might have been proper procedure in the early 1900's, when congregations of Greek Catholic Churches were accepted. But the lines were blurred between the Churches at that time. We wonder if it is fair or wise to accept by this method those from New Age groups, fundamentalist Protestant groups, charismatic groups, etc. who may not even have heard of Orthodoxy until just prior to acceptance. This is most disturbing.

Our Cassette Project is still on. For $5 you get a 60-minute cassette. We are now recording the April offer. Tape #1 Mark 9:17-31 music by Bortniansky "Pokayania" by Vedel, "O Tebi Raduyetsa" from St. Basil's Liturgy and "Pomoshnik e pokrovetel" from the Canon of St. Andrew; Side 2: Mark 10:32-45 Lenten songs sung by the choir of Zagorsky, the Capella Russian Male Chorus, the Imperial Chorale and "Thou has suffered on our behalf" by the congregation of Freeland, PA. Tape #2 John 12:1-18 The Music of Palm Sunday by the Nuns of Gethsemane, and the choir from Zagorsk among others; Side 2: John 1-17 Easter Music by Don Cossack Choir, the TVR Choir, Nuns of Gethsemane. Tape #3 John 20:19-31. Music by Arnheims slavisch Choir, St. Michael's Church Choir, Choir of the Monastics; Side 2: John 5:1-15 - The Liturgical Singers of NY, the Cathedral choir of Paris, Choir of the Holy Trinity, the Japanese Liturgical Chorus of Tokyo.

A complete set for every Sunday of the Liturgical Year (52 tapes) is available for $130.

We ask you to "Pray that we may meet the Resurrection." God be with you on your Lenten journey.

Beseeching your prayers,

The Stroyens

OBSERVATIONS FROM HERITAGE TOURS

Whether you have heard them called bandurky, kortoflee, zemlyakey, krumplee, or crumplee, they are potatoes. One of the lasting impressions we have of our trips which circle the Carpathian Mountains is the large number of people we saw digging potatoes. Mile after mile we saw them busily digging and bagging. Potatoes were planted everywhere, even in front yards. This was true whether we were in Slovakia, Poland, or Ukraine.

Most of the large towns and cities are surrounded by communal gardens, where the inhabitants of these places have a vegetable garden with most of it given over to potatoes. Some of them have rented the plot so long that they have built little sheds to store their tools and a place to sit while they rest and enjoy the fresh air.

Fortunate are the city dwellers who still have relatives in the village. They usually plant their potatoes in the family plot. We saw them digging away.

When we meet our relatives, one of the first things they tell us is that they have "collected" their potatoes and then in detail they tell us whether they will have enough to see them through the winter.

Potatoes are a staple and not a side dish. The housewife has an unending number of ways to serve them.

When I was in high school, I had the chore of peeling potatoes for a family of seven. This was almost a daily job, and I hated it. For potatoes were a regular staple in our family during the depression years and my father did not let us peel the potatoes but I had to scrape them to take as little peel off as possible. While visiting Europe, I realized that this was the way people there still peel their potatoes. They don't waste any. I find that the training still holds and I stills scrape potatoes or scrub them thoroughly and serve them skin and all. Besides this, I am still shocked to see so many women peel potatoes with a paring knife. They seem to have such a thick skin that half of the potato is gone. I am surprised to see so few potato peelers in homes and church kitchens. Perhaps, if we had to plant, tend, dig and have potatoes as a large part of our diet until the garden starts to bring forth a harvest, we would be as careful as our relatives are to use as much of the potato as possible.

MISSION FUND

Copies of "The Herald" are sent to places other than Alaska to do "Mission Work." Many places in this country and overseas ask for copies. Those overseas usually ask for a copy to translate and use in their mission work. Helping are: Walter Kulakovich, Dcn. Joseph Hotrovich, Annie Lynch, Mr. & Mrs. M. Vovos, Anonymous (3), Cyril Wadzita, Frank M. Romanick, Anne Worobey, Victor Niebuhr, Ethel Watlock, Donald Belinsky, Dorothy Sawko, Johanna Wagner, Michael Petronko, Ph.D. for the Carpathian area in memory of his parents John and Mary Petronko.



Orthodox people prepare for Great Lent with the same diligence that they prepare for Christmas Eve Supper and Easter. Before we could buy herrings without bones, cut and seasoned for our convenience, the coming of Lent had people going to the grocery store and buying a wooden bucket full of whole herrings. These were prepared in many ways and were a mainstay in lunch buckets, especially during the first and last weeks of Lent. Certain foods were made, among them Peppers in Oil, Eggplant Caviar, Bean Soup, Marinated Fish and Potatoes with Fried Onions. What signaled to you that Lent was coming?

This month I'm giving you the recipe for Roasted Green Peppers, which accompanied the potatoes or were used in sandwiches. My family received this recipe at least 60 years ago from Matushka Chepeleff.

Roasted canned peppers are easily obtainable now, but it is much cheaper making your own. These can be enjoyed all year 'round, served with cubes of white cheese, black olives, green onions or with bitki (meat cakes eaten cold).

ROASTED PEPPERS

4 bell peppers
4 cloves garlic
salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup olive or vegetable oil

You may use any color bell peppers. Half or quarter them lengthwise, core and remove seeds. Flatten each pepper slightly with palm of hand. Try not to crack them. Lay them, skin side up, in single layer on a baking sheet. Broil about 3

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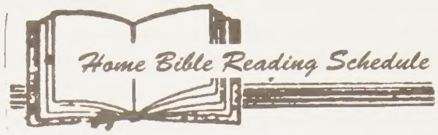
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When sending in a change of address, please be sure to include the address label from a copy or the code numbers which are printed above your name.



MARCH 1997

1. 1 Cor 10:23-28
2. **1 Cor 8:8-9:2**
3. 3 John 1:1-15
4. Jude 1:1-10
5. Joel 2:12-26
6. Jude 1:11-25
7. Zach 8:7-17
8. Romans 14:19-23, 16:25-27
9. **Romans 13:11-14-14:4**
10. Gen 1:1-13
11. Isaiah 1:19-2:3
12. Isaiah 2:3-11
13. Isaiah 2:11-22
14. Isaiah 3:1-14
15 Heb 1:1-12
16. **Heb 11:24-26, 32-12:2**
17. Isa 4:2-6; 5:1-7
18. Isa 5:1-15
19. Isa 5:15-6:3
20. Isa 6:1-12
21. Isa 7:1-14
22. Heb 3:12-16
23. **Heb 1:10-2:3**
24. Proverbs 8:1-21
25. Proverbs 8:32-9:11
26. Proverbs 9:12-18
27. Proverbs 10:1-22
28. Proverbs 10:31-11:12
29. Heb 10:32-38
30. **Heb 4:14-5:6**
31. Proverbs 8:32-9:11

bold type (Sundays)
Lent begins: 10th
Sunday of Orthodoxy - 16th

BIBLE STUDY

No Christian stands alone. Each one is a member of what the Bible calls the Body of Christ.

Christians have an obligation to "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Gal 6:2) Much like during times of injuries to key players on a team, others have to step in to carry a heavier load.

The good athletes enjoy their sport – but they take it seriously, too. Likewise, the calling of God is something to be grasped not only with joy but also with all seriousness and not half-heartedly, especially in this age of moral and spiritual darkness.

The goal of eternal life is worth enduring the race or the fight of faith, to use the athletic analogies used by the apostle Paul.

To inspire us, God has left us a written record of the lives of faithful men and women. They are profiled in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, which is read on the first Sunday of Great Lent (March 16 this year). They have been inducted into a Hall of Fame, or better, a Hall of Faith. Their reliance on His guidance and power enabled them to "work through" sore trials and tests.

We learn, for example, of the faith displayed by Abraham. Fully trusting in God, he left his homeland and headed for a place of God's choosing, which he would later receive as an inheritance. (verse 8)

His wife, Sarah, despite her initial doubts and against all human logic, believed that, even at her advanced age and barren condition, God would miraculously produce through her the heir He had promised to Abraham. "She judged Him faithful who had promised." (verse 11)

Moses' faith was evidenced by his willingness to forsake his high position in Egypt. Instead, he "chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God." He regarded the reproach for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward." (verses 25, 26)

In summarizing, there are many more people mentioned who "By faith" acted to receive the promise of God. However, in summarizing the lives of others who are not mentioned by name, St. Paul said some "were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put into prison.

"They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated – the world was not worthy of them." (verse 35-38)

All these faithful had died, not yet having received the promises, God having "provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us." (verse 40)

They represent a "great cloud of witnesses" intended to help us "run with perseverance the race marked out for us." (Hebrews 12:1) This choice of scripture for the First Sunday of Lent is most appropriate. How can we complain about fasting or the extra services, or their added length or the extra prayer time when we read about what others gave up: often their lives! To help us we are told to "fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross." (2:2)

ALASKA FUND

About 40 residents of Akutan on an Aleutian Island were flown 40 miles south to Dutch Harbor recently because of an earthquake. In addition to the 80 or so year 'round residents, 500 seasonal cannery workers were here to process crab and pollock. Akutan is one of the missions receiving copies of The Orthodox Herald. Helping are Frank M. Romanick, Mr. & Mrs. Michael Vovos, Dcn. Joseph Hotrovich, Annie Lynch, Fr. G. Dudash, Justine Post, Mary Leszunova, Halina Belsky, Anne Koppang, Anonymous (3), A.M. Fedec in memory of his great uncle Rt. Rev. Andrew Fedetz, Ann Worobey, Victor Niebuhr, Ethel Watlock, Dorothy Sawko, Johanna Wagner.